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Chairman: Mr. ZAHID (Morocco)
(Vice-Chairman)

Chairman of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions: Mr. MSELLE

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In the absence of Mr. Dinu (Romania), Mr. Zahid (Morocco), Vice-Chairman, took the Chair.

The meeting was called to order at 10.35 a.m.

AGENDA ITEM 112: PERSONNEL QUESTIONS (continued) (A/C.5/47/L.21, L.34 and L.35)

1. Ms. ROTHEISER (Austria), introducing draft resolution A/C.5/47/L.21 and draft decisions A/C.5/47/L.34 and L.35, said that the delegations participating in the informal consultations had shown a spirit of compromise which had resulted in a consensus on those texts.

2. Draft resolution A/C.5/47/L.21 contained an introduction and four sections. The section on personnel management planning covered the topics of recruitment, composition of the Secretariat, secondment, employment of spouses, career development and improvement of the status of women in the Secretariat. The other sections related to the administration of justice, reporting, and amendments to staff regulations. With regard to the request of the General Assembly that the annual publication of the list of staff of the United Nations Secretariat should be resumed as of 30 June 1993 (sect. III, para. 2), that list was expected to contain an organizational chart of the Secretariat, as well as indexes by nationality and alphabetical order. Delegations would also appreciate the publication of an updated telephone directory.

3. Draft decision A/C.5/47/L.34 took note of the amendments to the Staff Rules and draft decision A/C.5/47/L.35 concerned violations of privileges and immunities. The two draft decisions and the draft resolution should be viewed as complementary and she recommended their adoption by consensus.

4. Mr. JAKUBOWSKI (United States of America) requested confirmation from the Secretariat that the Staff Rules were a code of conduct applying to all United Nations officials, including those elected or appointed. His delegation had joined the consensus on the relevant draft decision based on that understanding.

5. Ms. CLIFF (United Kingdom) drew attention to administrative instruction ST/AI/382 of 3 March 1993 regarding special measures to improve the status of women in the Secretariat, paragraph 7 of which stated that a post would become available for male recruitment only after it had been vacant for 12 months and no qualified woman candidate had been identified. Such a policy raised questions with regard to the interpretation of the Charter and had legal and practical implications. Programme managers who were unable to fill posts for periods of over a year might face difficulties.

6. Mr. RAE (India) said that the questions raised by the United States and United Kingdom delegations had merit, but they were not germane to the draft resolution before the Committee. The Committee should take a decision on the draft resolution before discussing those questions.

7. Mr. FONTAINE-ORTIZ (Cuba) agreed with the representative of India. His delegation was not aware of the administrative instruction referred to by the representative of the United Kingdom and would like clarification as to how it was linked to the approval of the draft resolution. It would also welcome information from the Secretariat about any connection with the

(Mr. Fontaine-Ortiz, Cuba)

Secretary-General's policy on vacancy management. His delegation wondered how the goals set by the General Assembly for the recruitment of women would be reconciled with the principle of equitable geographical distribution.

8. Ms. VASAK (France) said that her delegation would welcome clarification of the administrative instruction on the status of women. Great care must be taken to avoid practising reverse discrimination.

9. Mr. CHUINKAM (Cameroon) said that the Committee must use caution in the signals it sent to the Secretary-General, who had been asked to find ways to bring about the equitable representation of women in the Secretariat. If the Committee became too closely involved in that process, it ran the ri3k of practising micro-management, which it had frequently opposed.

10. Mr. SENGWE (Zimbabwe) said that the Secretary-General was operating within his mandate from the General Assembly as expressed in the relevant resolutions. The goals set with respect to redressing the gender imbalance were within the spirit and letter of those resolutions. Nothing could be achieved by questioning the Secretary-General on the subject of reverse discrimination, as long as the Secretariat was operating within the mandate of General Assembly resolution 45/239 C.

11. Mr. WANG Xiaochu (China) said that the Committee had before it a draft resolution and two draft decisions on which a consensus had been achieved during extensive informal consultations. The issue of the status of women in the Secretariat could also be discussed but, in the opinion of his delegation, it had no direct bearing on the matter under consideration.

12. Mr. OSELLA (Argentina) said that his delegation would welcome information from the Director of Personnel on the connection between administrative instruction ST/AI/382 and the goals set by the General Assembly for the recruitment of women.

13. The CHAIRMAN said that the Committee should first adopt the draft resolution and the draft decisions, on which a consensus had been achieved in information consultations, and then hear the Director of Personnel.

14. Mr. JAKUBOWSKI (United States of America) said that the ability of his delegation to join in the consensus was dependent in part on the response to be given by the Director of Personnel to the question it had raised. As things stood, his delegation would be unable to support the draft resolution.

15. Mrs. EMERSON (Portugal) said that her delegation agreed with the Chairman.

16. Mr. GIUFFRIDA (Italy) said that his delegation shared the views expressed by the representatives of the United Kingdom and France. It had no objection to taking a decision, provided that that was not interpreted by the Secretariat as implying acceptance of the administrative instruction on the status of women in the Secretariat and the vacancy management policy.

17. Mr. DUHALT VILLAR (Mexico) and Mr. FRANCIS (Australia) said that their delegations shared the concerns expressed by the United Kingdom and France, and favoured proceeding with the adoption of the draft resolution and draft decisions.

18. Mr. DUQUE (Director of Personnel), replying to the representative of the United States, said that the Staff Rules applied to staff members only, not to any other officials.

19. Mr. MICHALSKI (United States of America) said that his delegation had been under the impression that the Staff Rules applied to all those who drew salaries from the United Nations regular budget, including, for instance, the chairmen of expert bodies.

20. Mr. DUQUE (Director of Personnel) said that the Staff Rules defined the obligations and privileges of staff members under the authority of the Secretary-General. The chairmen of subsidiary organs of the General Assembly and the judges of the International Court of Justice were not under the supervision of the Secretary-General.

21. Mr. MICHALSKI (United States of America) said that the information provided by the Director of Personnel was contrary to his delegation's understanding. If, indeed, a large number of officials drawing salaries from the regular budget were not governed by any system of rules, his delegation could not join the consensus.

22. Mr. JADMANI (Pakistan) said that his delegation appreciated the concern expressed by the United Kingdom and United States representatives. Since those concerns affected the adoption of the draft resolution, it might be useful for the Committee to hold further informal consultations.

23. The CHAIRMAN suggested that, since one delegation no longer joined in the consensus on the draft resolution, the Committee might consider the remaining questions on its agenda and return to personnel questions later in the meeting.

24. Ms. ROTHEISER (Austria) said that a consensus had been reached on all the texts issuing from the informal consultations. The Committee should therefore proceed with their adoption.

25. Mr. WANG Xiaochu (China) agreed.

26. Mr. STÖCKL (Germany) said that he had participated in the informal consultations during which the representative of the Secretariat had stated that the Staff Rules also applied to officials paid out of the United Nations regular budget. All those who were responsible to the General Assembly should adhere to the spirit of the Staff Rules, which were decided upon by the General Assembly.

27. Mr. FONTAINE-ORTIZ (Cuba) said that his delegation would prefer not to postpone a decision on the matter and that, since the draft texts had been drawn up on the basis of consensus, they should be adopted by consensus. It was Cuba's understanding that certain officials of the United Nations system, such as the Chairman of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions (ACABQ) and the judges of the International Court of Justice (ICJ), were not covered by the Staff Rules and that their conduct was regulated by

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special conditions determined by the General Assembly. He suggested that further clarification of that point from the Secretariat would help the Committee to reach a consensus on the matter at hand.

28. Mr. GIUFFRIDA (Italy) said that, as he recalled, when, during the informal consultations, the representative of the United States had sought clarification on the applicability of the Staff Rules to non-Secretariat officials, the representative of the Secretariat had been unable to give a precise answer and had merely stated that, to the best of his knowledge, the rules might apply to other appointed or elected officials. The United States representative had not, however, made any link at that time between its support for the resolution and the scope of the Staff Rules. He therefore agreed with the representative of Austria that there had been, and continued to be a consensus on the draft texts and he appealed to all members of the Committee to take a decision without further delay.

29. Mr. TOYAMA (Japan) noted that no resolution had been adopted by the Committee on personnel questions since December 1990 and that a great deal of time and effort had been spent in drafting and reaching consensus on the draft resolution currently before the Committee. He commended the representative of Austria on her efforts in achieving that consensus and urged members to adopt the draft resolution without further delay.

30. Mr. DUQUE (Director of Personnel), clarifying the issue of the applicability of the Staff Rules, drew attention to the scope and purpose of the Staff Regulations of the United Nations as defined in the Staff Rules and, in particular, to regulation 1.2, which stated that staff members were subject to the authority of the Secretary-General and to assignment by him to any of the activities or offices of the United Nations. It was clear from those general statements that the Staff Rules could not apply to those elected and appointed officials outside the Secretariat referred to by other speakers, but only to staff members under the authority of the Secretary-General. In response to the point raised by the representative of Cuba, he confirmed that the General Assembly determined the conditions of service of the officials in question, which were embodied in its resolution and not in any regulation per se.

31. Mr. ONWUALIA (Nigeria) said that he was not surprised that the Committee had reached an impasse in its efforts to adopt the resolution, since one delegation had systematically sought to impede progress on the resolution from the very outset. He noted that the United States delegation had been present during the informal consultations when consensus had finally been achieved on the draft resolution, and he therefore supported those delegations which had called for its adoption without further delay on the basis of consensus.

32. Mr. LADJOUZI (Algeria) said that every delegation had the right, at any time before the adoption of a resolution, to make its views known and to make any efforts it thought necessary to improve the text. He hoped, however, that the reply given by the Director of Personnel would assist those delegations which were still experiencing difficulties with the draft resolution to proceed with its adoption. The officials in question, such as the Chairmen of ACABQ and the International Civil Service Commission (ICSC), were not members of the Secretariat and were therefore covered not by the Staff Rules but by specific

(Mr. Ladjouzi, Algeria)

conditions set forth in the relevant resolutions. There was therefore no link between those officials and the staff members of the Secretariat covered by the draft resolution currently before the Committee.

33. Ms. SHENWICK (United States of America) said that, in the informal consultations, her delegation had originally proposed the establishment of a code of conduct covering all United Nations officials but, in the light of assurances from a member of the Secretariat that the Staff Rules appeared to apply to all United Nations officials and following consultations with United States authorities and legal experts, it had decided to withdraw that proposal. Her delegation had made it very clear, however, that it would require confirmation, in a formal meeting, and from the Director of Personnel, of the scope of the Staff Rules. As no such confirmation had been given, her delegation wished to clarify the point prior to the adoption of the draft resolution. In the light of the explanation given by the Director of Personnel, she wondered whether the United Nations should not consider adopting some form of common code of conduct, which would cover all its officials, not just members of the Secretariat. Given such an undertaking, the United States would be happy to proceed with the adoption of the resolution by consensus.

34. Mr. STÖCKL (Germany) said that the explanation by the Director of Personnel had been very clear. The issue of elected officials whose conditions of service fell within the purview not of the Secretariat, but of the bodies which had elected them, should be taken up at another time. He commended the delegation of the United States on its readiness to abide by the consensus on the draft resolution, which it hoped could be adopted without further ado.

35. Mr. FONTAINE-ORTIZ (Cuba) agreed. As the duties and obligations of officials of the Organization who were not members of the Secretariat did not fall within the scope of the Staff Rules, the issue was not relevant to the draft resolution under consideration. With regard to the proposal that the Secretariat should consider a common code of conduct, he pointed out that, as noted by the Director of Personnel, the Secretary-General was responsible only for the staff of the Secretariat, while other officials were answerable to the General Assembly. Such a code of conduct should therefore be considered by the General Assembly and not by the Secretariat.

36. Mr. SY (Senegal) supported the views expressed by the representative of Cuba. The draft resolution under consideration dealt with personnel issues and the question of a code of conduct for elected officials reporting to bodies outside the Secretariat did not therefore fall under the current agenda item. He urged the United States representative to agree to the adoption of the draft resolution and suggested that its legitimate concerns should be taken up as a separate matter.

37. Mr. RAZVIN (Russian Federation) said that it was inevitable that the Staff Rules should require periodic amendments, in accordance with the changing times. Such amendments posed questions which could not be entered into by the Committee without first hearing the views of legal experts. With regard to the draft resolution under consideration, he said that the consensus which had been achieved after great effort meant that all meant that all members were, on balance, prepared to accept the text as a whole, even though they might have problems with certain details. His delegation believed that the Committee

(Mr. Razvin, Russian Federation)

should proceed to the adoption of the draft resolution and take up Members' concerns about the scope and applicability of the Staff Rules as a separate matter.

38. Mr. DUQUE (Director of Personnel), in response to the point raised by the United States, said that the Secretariat had no mandate to prepare a code of conduct for officials who reported directly to such bodies as the General Assembly and the International Court of Justice.

39. The CHAIRMAN, in response to a request by Ms. SHENWICK (United States of America), supported by Mr. WANG Xiaochu (China), suggested that the meeting should be adjourned to enable members to consult informally on the issues raised by the United States representative, with a view to adopting the draft resolution when the meeting reconvened.

The meeting was suspended at 11.55 a.m. and resumed at 12.15 p.m.

40. Ms. SHENWICK (United States of America) said that her delegation was now prepared to join the consensus and would explain its position after the decision.

41. The CHAIRMAN suggested that the Committee should proceed to the adoption of the draft resolution and the two draft decisions.

42. Draft resolution A/C.5/47/L.21 was adopted.

43. Draft decision A/C.5/47/L.34 was adopted.

44. Draft decision A/C.5/47/L.35 was adopted.

45. Mr. DUHALT VILLAR (Mexico), speaking in explanation of his delegation's position, said he was gratified by the adoption of the resolution and the decisions on personnel questions that had been pending for some years. On the point raised by the United Kingdom and other representatives regarding personnel recruitment on the basis of gender, Mexico supported any effort to achieve equality of men and women in the United Nations staff, but emphasized the need to eliminate any restrictions in recruitment. The problem could not be solved by imposing restrictions or treating candidates unequally. That was clearly the view expressed in paragraph 6 of the resolution which had just been adopted. Any administrative instruction issued by the Secretary-General or any practice established by the Secretariat should be in keeping with that paragraph.

46. Ms. SHENWICK (United States of America) said that her delegation regretted the confusion that had arisen earlier, but believed that it had acted in good faith in relying on the representations of the Secretariat. During the ensuing consultations, she had been gratified by the concern expressed by Member States over the regulations, or the lack thereof, governing the ethical conduct of United Nations officials. There seemed to be a consensus that the conduct of officials should be governed by a code, or that, at the least, the question of such a code should be discussed. Her delegation was concerned that no rules existed to govern the conduct of officials appointed by the General Assembly, and it intended to raise the issue again in the plenary Assembly.

(Ms. Shenwick, United States)

47. Her delegation could not agree that the existing United Nations rules did not apply to United Nations officials in the broadest sense of the term. Even if there were no rules of conduct apart from those included in the Staff Rules, prudence, diligence, good management and ethical considerations in general should induce officials to be bound by the spirit, if not the letter, of the Staff Rules in so far as they applied to their positions.

48. Mr. FRANCIS (Australia) expressed his delegation's appreciation at the successful negotiation of the resolution which had just been adopted. It was particularly important as the Secretary-General's ongoing restructuring of the Secretariat needed to be underpinned by a modern personnel management system. His delegation looked forward to an improvement in the representation of women at the senior levels. It wished to draw the Secretariat's attention to paragraph 6, to which the representative of Mexico had also referred, and to paragraph B.11 of the resolution, which made it clear that discrimination against staff members of either sex would not be tolerated. That, of course, was perfectly consistent with the terms of paragraph 3 of Article 101 of the Charter.

49. The terms of administrative instruction ST/AI/382 needed to be carefully reviewed in the light of the resolution just adopted. It was precisely the likelihood of such developments that had led his delegation to take the position that the resolution would have been significantly improved by the establishment, outside the Office of Human Resources Management, of an equal employment opportunity unit capable of effectively policing personnel procedures and actions throughout the Secretariat.

50. Finally, he drew the Secretariat's attention to paragraph 4 of section II of the resolution, which made it clear that Member States expected the Secretary-General to interpret his guidelines on sexual harassment to encompass more of the working relationship than just what took place within the physical confines of the Secretariat.

51. Mrs. EMERSON (Portugal) said that, in her delegation's view, administrative instruction ST/AI/382 contravened Article 8 of the Charter and would have a negative impact on geographical distribution. Indeed, many countries already experienced great difficulty in presenting male candidates; if they were now required to propose female candidates, their task would become even harder.

52. Mr. RAE (India) said that his delegation had joined the consensus on the resolution which had just been adopted reluctantly as is regretted that an important policy aspect of the item on personnel questions, namely, equitable geographical representation - as reflected by the formula for determining desirable ranges - had not been finalized by the Fifth Committee, despite the decision in resolution 42/220 that the matter should be reviewed at the forty-fifth session. He hoped that the Working Group of the Fifth Committee which was to be established would arrive at a satisfactory recommendation for adoption by the General Assembly at its forty-eighth session. Despite its reservations, his delegation had joined the consensus because it was important that a statement should be made by the Fifth Committee and the General Assembly on personnel questions. At a time of change and restructuring, the Committee should provide guidance to the General Assembly on an issue which affected the most vital resource of the United Nations.

53. Mr. JADMANI (Pakistan) said that the agenda item on personnel questions was important to his delegation since under that item the General Assembly provided guidelines to assist the Secretary-General in administering the affairs of the Secretariat. That was particularly important during the process of restructuring initiated by the Secretary-General. His delegation had joined in the consensus so that the Secretariat could carry out its work more efficiently. He hoped that the subject of desirable ranges would receive serious consideration and attention.

54. Mr. KARBUCZKY (Hungary) agreed with other delegations that paragraph 6 of the resolution which had just been adopted met the concerns over gender-based discrimination in the Secretariat. He felt that the resolution would give clear guidance on achieving a gender balance without the need for discriminatory measures.

55. Mr. SY (Senegal), referring to paragraph 6 of the resolution, said that many delegations held that no gender-based discrimination was permissible in recruitment. There had, however, been a consensus to ask the Secretary-General to take measures to compensate for the underrepresentation of women. In cases where male and female candidates were equally qualified and a woman was given preference, that preference did not constitute discrimination.

56. His delegation welcomed paragraph 5 of the section of the resolution dealing with the composition of the Secretariat, which asked for flexibility on the question of desirable ranges, provided that was not to the detriment of equitable geographical distribution. However, paragraph 3 of the section on secondment needed to be defined more clearly. Certain Governments renewed such secondments under internal legal provisions that took precedence over any other agreement.

57. With regard to the draft decision concerning violations of privileges and immunities (A/C.5/47/L.35), he said he hoped that the report of the Secretary-General on the question would also reflect the opinions of the States concerned, since immunity was not technically a question for the Fifth Committee and involved complex legal considerations.

58. Mr. WANG Xiaochu (China) said that, on the matter of desirable ranges, his delegation shared the views expressed by the representative of India and Pakistan and other delegations. The question had long been discussed in the General Assembly, but unfortunately had not yet been resolved. He hoped that through serious discussion a solution would be forthcoming.

59. Ms. CLIFF (United Kingdom) said that the United States representative had referred to issues which, in her delegation's view, were outside the scope of the resolution and the decisions on personnel questions which had just been adopted. She would like more information regarding the intentions of the United States delegation. For the record, she observed that the United Kingdom had not entered into any understanding regarding further work in that area during the remainder of the forty-seventh session.

60. Her delegation was becoming very concerned over the working methods of the Fifth Committee. There was a growing disorder, bordering on abuse of the consensus procedures the Committee had been trying to develop since the

(Ms. Cliff, United Kingdom)

forty-first session. She hoped that the Chairman and the Bureau would give some thought to the Committee's working methods and provide guidance thereon to the incoming chairman and bureau for the forty-eighth session. In her delegation's view, one symptom of the disorder was the introduction, very late in the process of negotiation of consensus texts, of far-reaching proposals that stretched the limits of the specific agenda items referred to the Fifth Committee by the General Assembly. Sometimes, indeed, the same proposal was introduced, equally late, under more than one agenda item. Such tactics could prolong the process of negotiating consensus texts almost indefinitely.

61. Her remarks were not aimed at any particular delegation. Consensus-building was of great importance to her delegation, which felt that all delegations should seriously reflect on ways to improve the process during the next session.

62. Ms. VASAK (France) said that her delegation, too, had been concerned over the growing disorder in the work of the Fifth Committee.

63. Mr. TIERLINCK (Belgium) said that he fully agreed with the United Kingdom that it was high time for the Committee to find a way to improve its working methods.

64. Mr. MICHALSKI (United States of America), speaking in exercise of the right of reply with regard to the remarks by the United Kingdom representative concerning the disorder in the Committee, observed that his delegation had been given an understanding during the informal consultations that it felt had not been carried through. His delegation had been compelled to raise an issue of extreme concern to the United States, and regretted it if that had made the Committee's work more complicated. Nevertheless, it would continue to present the United States position, while trying not to disrupt the work of the Committee.

65. Mr. FONTAINE-ORTIZ (Cuba) said that, while the General Assembly had set guidelines for the advancement of women in the Secretariat, other principles also had priority, for instance, competence, integrity and the geographical distribution of staff. Preference should be given to women in recruitment and appointment only if all those other conditions were also met.

66. Member States differed on what the Secretary-General's role should be in administrative and budgetary matters: some wanted him to have full freedom of action and others instead argued for micro-management, an approach with which Cuba disagreed.

67. His delegation regretted that the issue of desirable ranges had not been settled, but expected the Working Group to be established under the resolution which had just been adopted to give the matter serious consideration.

68. He agreed with the United Kingdom that serious consideration should be given to the Committee's methods of work. The root of the problem was a mistaken interpretation of resolution 41/213 on the matter of consensus. Consensus should not be taken as an absolute rule, and the practice of extending it to non-budgetary questions needed to be reviewed.

69. Mr. LADJOUZI (Algeria) expressed the hope that the adoption of the resolution and the two decisions foreshadowed a more coherent and transparent personnel policy. The Secretary-General would then be in a better position to carry out his mandate. His delegation, like those of Mexico and Australia, attached great importance to paragraph 6 of the resolution. He regretted that parity between men and women had not been achieved in the Secretariat, despite the existence of a consensus in the General Assembly. Algeria hoped that paragraph 4 of the section of the resolution dealing with the composition of the Secretariat would lead to more efficient implementation of the principle of equitable geographical distribution.

70. Mr. STÖCKL (Germany), referring to paragraph 8 of annex I to the Staff Regulations regarding the language allowance for General Service staff, said that his Government was of the view that it should be extended to include the German language and should apply to the staff of the German Translation Section, especially since their salaries and benefits were paid not out of the regular budget but out of a trust fund financed by the German-speaking Member States.

71. Mr. SASTRAWAN (Indonesia) expressed regret at the Committee's failure to take action on the issue of desirable ranges, which had been pending for a number of years.

72. Mr. GIUFFRIDA (Italy) said that his delegation had joined the consensus on the texts which had been adopted because of the importance it attached to draft decision A/C.5/47/L.35. Member States should, in their own interests, make it a priority to have a thorough debate on any cases of violations of privileges and immunities reported by the Secretary-General.

73. His delegation fully agreed that there must be no gender-based discrimination in recruitment or promotion at any level of the United Nations.

74. Mr. BARIMANI (Islamic Republic of Iran) endorsed the comments of the representatives of India, Pakistan and other delegations regarding the question of desirable ranges and regretted that the issue was still unresolved. His delegation had joined the consensus on the understanding that the issue would be dealt with by the Working Group to be established under the draft resolution.

75. Mr. DUQUE (Director of Personnel), replying to points raised by delegations, assured the Committee that the Secretariat would submit all the reports which had been requested. It had not been possible earlier to take the technical action required to amend the Staff Regulations because the question had become embroiled in the negotiations on the draft resolution on personnel questions. He hoped that in the future the issue would be separated from political concerns.

76. With regard to the administrative instruction on special measures to improve the status of women in the Secretariat (ST/AI/382), he assured the Committee that the Secretariat would always be guided by the Charter, specifically all paragraphs of Article 101 and Article 8. The Secretary-General and the General Assembly had concluded that Article 8 had not been fully observed in the past and the Secretary-General was determined to take steps to remedy the gender violations, especially at the higher levels of the Organization. The administrative instruction had been cleared by all the appropriate persons, including the Legal Counsel and

(Mr. Duque)

other Secretariat officials; staff representatives had also been consulted. While the document was not perfect, it did serve to promote the goal of eliminating discrimination against women. There appeared to be something wrong in the Secretariat, since the higher the post, the fewer the number of women considered or appointed. The Office of Human Resources Management had, for instance, found that, on occasion, qualified women working at other duty stations where there were no vacancies had not been considered for placement elsewhere within the system; it was seeking to ensure that no one would thus be forgotten.

77. With regard to the policy that a post was available for male recruitment only after it had been vacant for 12 months (para. 7 of the administrative instruction), it was intended to ensure that a fair search was made, well in advance, for the best qualified candidate, before a permanent appointment could be made. In practice, however, departments were authorized to fill the post on an interim basis while the search was being conducted.

78. The appointment of women should in no way compromise the highest standards of competence, efficiency and integrity, or geographical distribution, and the Secretariat had no intention of waiving any of those requirements while taking the steps set out in paragraph 2 of the administrative instruction. The principle of justice would always apply, and there was no intention of creating reverse discrimination.

79. The CHAIRMAN said that the Committee had concluded its consideration of agenda item 112 and he requested the Rapporteur to report thereon directly to the General Assembly.

AGENDA ITEM 121: FINANCING OF THE UNITED NATIONS MISSION FOR THE REFERENDUM IN WESTERN SAHARA (continued)

80. Mr. TIERLINCK (Belgium), reporting on the informal consultations with regard to the financing of the United Nations Mission for the Referendum in Western Sahara (MINURSO), said that the Committee would not be able to consider the report of the Secretary-General (A/47/743) in view of the recent decision by the Security Council concerning the implementation of the Settlement Plan regarding the question of Western Sahara. It had accordingly been proposed, in the light of Security Council resolution 809 (1993), and in particular the activities enumerated in paragraphs 2 and 3 thereof, that the Fifth Committee should recommend to the General Assembly that a commitment authorization in an amount not exceeding US$ 3,449,700 gross ($3,319,400 net) per month for the period from 1 March to 30 June 1993 should be given to the Secretary-General, subject to the concurrence of ACABQ. Those resources should be utilized from the unencumbered balance of the appropriation provided for MINURSO.

81. He explained that the additional activities required under paragraphs 2 and 3 of Security Council resolution 809 (1993), for which resources had not been included in the report of the Secretary-General (A/47/743), were the following: (a) intensified efforts by the Secretary-General to conduct several rounds of talks with the parties and with representatives of neighbouring countries, possibly including talks in New York or Geneva, or, alternatively, to conduct "shuttle" diplomacy between Laayoune and Tindouf; and (b) preparations for the referendum, specifically the establishment of an Identification

(Mr. Tierlinck, Belgium)

Commission to conduct identification and registration of all Saharans counted in the 1974 census taken by the Spanish authorities and aged 18 years and older. The Identification Commission would conduct research in order to review the census carefully, arrange for the revised list to be published in the Territory and in places outside the Territory where a number of Western Saharans were known to be living, and publish instructions on how Western Saharans could apply in writing.

82. Those activities would require additional resources relating primarily to the costs of civilian personnel, including consultants, travel, transport and air operations and miscellaneous equipment, supplies and services. Those resources were currently not expected to exceed $1,120,200 per month for the period from 1 April to 31 May 1993.

83. The Committee decided to recommend that, in the light of Security Council resolution 809 (1993) and, in particular, the activities enumerated in paragraphs 2 and 3 of that resolution, the General Assembly should authorize the Secretary-General to enter into commitments in an amount not exceeding $3,499,700 gross ($3,319,400 net) per month for the period 1 March to 30 June 1993, subject to the concurrence of the Advisory Committee, from the unencumbered balance of the appropriation approved for MINURSO.

84. The CHAIRMAN said that the Committee had concluded its consideration of agenda item 121, and he requested the Rapporteur to report thereon directly to the General Assembly.

AGENDA ITEM 117. FINANCING OF THE UNITED NATIONS ANGOLA VERIFICATION MISSION (continued)

85. Mr. TIERLINCK (Belgium), reporting on the informal consultations with regard to the financing of the United Nations Angola Verification Mission (UNAVEM II), said that, in the light of the change in the operational plan of that Mission and the need by the Secretariat to revise the Secretary-General's report on its financing (A/47/744), the Committee would regrettably not be able to follow the normal procedure pending submission of a revised report by the Secretary-General and the related report of the Advisory Committee.

86. It had therefore been proposed that the Fifth Committee should recommend to the General Assembly that, as an ad hoc measure, in order to provide for the continued maintenance of the Mission, a commitment authorization in an amount not exceeding US$ 3,500,000 gross ($3,400,000 net) per month for the period from 1 March to 30 April 1993 should be provided to the Secretary-General, subject to the concurrence of the Advisory Committee, that amount to be apportioned among Member States in accordance with the provisions of General Assembly resolution 47/224 A, since the Mission did not have a sufficient unencumbered balance to fund the extension.

87. It was further proposed that the General Assembly should urge the Secretary-General to give prompt attention to the request contained in resolution 47/224 B, which called for an urgent review of the current procedure for the planning of peace-keeping operations to enable the proper and timely launching of missions in a cost-effective and efficient manner.

88. The Committee decided to recommend that, in order to provide for the continued maintenance of the Mission, the General Assembly should authorize the Secretary-General to enter into commitments in an amount not exceeding $3,500,000 gross ($3,400,000 net) per month for the period 1 March to 30 April 1993 and to apportion the amount among Member States in accordance with the provisions of General Assembly resolution 47/224 A.

89. The CHAIRMAN said that, if he heard no objection, he would take it that the Committee wished to recommend that the General Assembly urge the Secretary-General to give prompt attention to the request made in resolution 47/224 B.

90. It was so decided.

91. Mr. SONGWE (Zimbabwe) thanked delegations for the flexibility they had shown in order to ensure that UNAVEM II would continue to be able to function with adequate funds in a difficult situation.

92. The CHAIRMAN said that the Committee had concluded its consideration of agenda item 117, and he requested the Rapporteur to report thereon directly to the General Assembly.

The meeting rose at 1.40 p.m.